

**Provision of Seeds to Drought Affected People in Eastern
and Central Tigray: An Evaluation**

Implemented by CISP and REST

**With funding from
USAID-OFDA**

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ACRONYMS

BANR	Bureau of Agriculture and Natural Resource
BWA	Bureau of Water Resources
CISP	Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli
DPPC	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission
IDP	Internally Displaced People
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
REST	Relief Society of Tigray
TRS	Tigray Regional State

Executive Summary

Tigray is one of the nine regional states in Ethiopia. The total population in the region crossed the 4-million level as of 2002/03. The economic lifeline of more than 83% of the population is subsistence agriculture. On the average, this activity meets only about 40% of the households' needs, thus food production is by far less than sufficient and other sources of income are limited. More than 60% of the total population lives in absolute poverty.

Large parts of the region are recurrently hit by drought. It had suffered from two decades of civil strife and the Ethio-Eritrean war. Most of the topography in the region is rugged and environmental degradation has depleted the productivity of the land. Rainfall is erratic and the rainy season brief: at times it begins early and at other times it starts late. The vast majority of farmers continue to use traditional production technology where oxen are the only source of traction and rain-fed crop production is dominant implying that drought remains to be the most devastating problem in the region. The available physical infrastructure is poor and the role of the market limited. This is in a nutshell the overall picture of rural Tigray.

Concerted efforts are underway to rehabilitate the land and develop social and economic infrastructure. However, the gains from such efforts are easily lost once a drought sets in and poor households are forced to restart their livelihoods from scratch. At times the droughts are so devastating that the economic foundation of the rural population is brought to a halt. The 2002/2003 drought is comparable to the one in 1984, which claimed the lives of many and resulted in mass exodus to neighboring Sudan. This time the problem has been contained without any disastrous effect with the help of external assistance and the institutional infrastructure in place to distribute relief aid. According to official documents, the proportion of the population affected and forced to depend on relief aid exceeded 50%.

The project that this study evaluates is concerned with the provision of 'cash for seed' to some 43,693 poor households with primary focus on female-headed families, residing in nine Woredas. It is a tripartite initiative undertaken between CISP, REST and USAID-OFDA with the objective of rehabilitating the most seriously affected households to restart normal production and preventing displacement.

CIPS is an international NGO having its headquarters in Italy whose mandate includes the promotion of food security and rural development. REST had its origins as early as 1978 when there was civil war in Tigray. It was the 1984 drought and the consequent exodus of hundreds of thousands of people that brought the capabilities and potentials of REST to the forefront.

REST's approach to relief assistance is community based. Demands and needs are jointly articulated by the communities, local administration and development agents. There is minimum interference from the center. There is sufficient institutional infrastructure for

the farmers to monitor the implementation of projects and programs commensurate with the interests of targeted beneficiaries.

USAID-OFDA is promptly responsive to local needs and its domain of intervention is in the provision of non-food disaster assistance. Its assistance combines both equity and efficiency considerations. But its assistance reaches the beneficiaries through international NGOs in order to ensure that resources are not diverted from their intended use.

This project is therefore exemplary in the sense that objectives and goals of the stakeholders are aligned. The partnership has enabled the efficient exploitation of existing local institutional infrastructure to effectively achieve the project objectives with all the checks and balances from beneficiaries, implementers and the funding body.

The overall objective of the 'cash for seed' project is to address the then immediate seed needs of severely drought affected communities in Central and Eastern Zones of the Tigray Regional State. It all started with an earlier agreement where CISP secured funds to provide cash for seeds for 10,213 households as part of its larger project called "Supply of Water and Provision of Seeds and Tools in Eastern Tigray Drought Affected Areas" in two Woredas.

However, field visits by officials from the funding agency, USAID-OFDA, led to an appreciation of the need for a larger intervention than envisaged by the project and advised CISP to enlarge the cash for seed component of the project to encompass additional beneficiaries in the Central and Eastern Zones of the region. Consequently, an agreement was reached between CISP and USAID-OFDA to finance the seed requirements of an additional 33,480 households in seven Woredas. The total amount of resources to be made available to REST was USD 639,761.31. The total fund earmarked to be channeled to the beneficiaries was USD 591,121.31. Thus around 92% of the fund received by REST was intended to reach the beneficiaries, while the remaining was intended for administrative purposes, including transport and logistics.

The purpose of this evaluation is to probe into the appropriateness of the emergency recovery project by way of cash provision for seed purchase and draw lessons for similar interventions in the future. In the light of this broad context, the evaluation examines the

- relevance of the project according to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, CISP, REST and the local conditions
- efficiency of the project management from the point of view of timeliness of project and resource utilization by beneficiaries for project purpose
- effectiveness of the project in achieving its stated objective
- impact of the project on the welfare of the beneficiaries and the local community, and finally
- sustainability of the project within the framework of local institutional infrastructure.

Primary and secondary sources have been utilized in undertaking this study. The secondary sources consulted are project documents, field reports, and disbursement files to beneficiaries obtained from REST and CISP. Qualitative data were generated through focus group discussions pertaining to issues of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability of the project. With the view to benefiting from synergy effects in the process of discussion, discussion groups were organized in such a way that perceptions are debated by different parties. Among the total Woredas that benefited from this project three were selected based on accessibility and intensity of the effect of drought. Seven types of focus group discussions were undertaken in the light of their perspectives and roles of their project.

The Woredas considered in this study were jointly identified by the representatives of CIPS, REST and the consultants. Representativeness, time constraint, road accessibility and the extent to which travel schedules can be synchronized were the main elements considered in selecting these Woredas.

The summary of our findings are presented in what follows.

Tigray is one of the most drought-prone parts of the country. The land is degraded as a result of centuries of cultivation without adequate attention to environmental degradation. Moisture shortage for crop production characterizes large parts of the Central and Eastern Zones of Tigray. Moreover, the topography in these localities is rugged and denuded of trees and vegetation. Consequently, the moisture catching capacity of the land is very low. The short rains have either not materialized at all, or they do so for a very short period that farmers cannot use them any more. Even the long rains have nowadays become shorter; they either start late or stop early that the total moisture available for crop production is insufficient.

Landholding in these localities is very small as a result of high population density, which has resulted in reduced carrying capacity of the arable land. The average landholding ranges between 0.35 hectares to 0.75 hectares. Output of poor households can only meet a quarter to three-quarters of the total households' yearly needs. To sustain life, farmers must be engaged in other income generating activities, which are literally non-existent. As a result, most families depend on food aid, which is mainly distributed in the form of 'food for work', for a good portion of the year for their survival.

Drought exacerbates and erodes the already fragile crop production and food status of rural households. Under such circumstances, food crises set in and asset depletion threatens production possibilities in the following production year. Animal depletion has a dire consequence to livelihoods in general, and farming in particular in these localities. Thus, though land is more or less evenly distributed, as is the case in the whole country, households lacking in either oxen or adult male labor or both fare badly in these communities. Such a predicament is characteristic of households that are headed by females and the elderly who have no adult labor in the household. Thus, two of the basic inputs in crop production, oxen and seeds, are not readily available in the aftermath of droughts for farming households.

It was under such a background that the 2002 drought struck these areas. As a result of this catastrophe most farmers in the Tigray and almost all farmers in the localities of the project lost the expected output from their farms. Some studies indicated that only 30% of the farmers in the drought affected Woredas could meet their seed requirement. It is this scenario that made the 'cash for seed' project relevant and an appropriate venture. The farmers identified the project as an instrument that has allowed the beneficiaries to attain their 'normal' or pre-drought levels of production in the 2003 production cycle.

The 2002/2003 drought was pervasive. Rural poverty is rampant in general, but with an obvious variations and intensity across individual households and areas in the region. A good indicator of wealth in these areas is the ownership of livestock. The next important contributor to wealth in these localities is the availability of adult male labour in the households. On both counts of wealth indicators, households headed by female and old aged without adult labour are identified as those in the lowest ladder of income source of livelihood.

The project utilized the existing government organizational structures of the rural development bureaus, REST, and the available development agents at the various levels of the hierarchy in executing its activities. Moreover, grassroots institutional settings of the communities were exploited properly and resulted in the effective implementation of the project.

Information regarding the objectives the project, type of targeted beneficiaries and mechanisms of implementing the project were made public at an early stage of implementation. Given the long tradition of discussing issues has enabled the communities to identify the beneficiaries from their respective villages. Noting the fact that the competition was very tight, given the limited amount of available cash and almost unlimited needs for being a beneficiary, the discussions in these forums were very heated and long. In fact, the non-beneficiaries expressed no complaint in the identification process.

There were complaints at both the 'meso' (Woreda and Grassroots') level administration and the beneficiaries that the money came in a bit late. The causes of such complaints were different, however.

The beneficiaries indicated that had they been given the money earlier they could have purchased the seeds earlier, when the prices were lower. Timing was so late for some beneficiaries and could not sow the crops that should have been planted in earlier periods (late May to early June).

There was consensus in all deliberations that female headed households are rightly the primary targets of the project, followed by the poor (those without any livestock) and the elderly. Some deserving non-beneficiaries have been left out for the available resources were limited.

The lack of seed for the next production cycle erodes the productive capacity of the poor households immediately after drought. Seed is a crucial production input. As a result of

drought and crop failure, most farmers had not been able to preserve seeds for the next production season.

Some argued that given the emergency nature of the intervention there was no quicker and faster modality of intervention other than 'cash for seeds'. Moreover, it was appreciated that this modality avails opportunity to farmers to make their own choice of the kind of seed they would like to plant, which is consistent to the local agro-ecology, fertility of the land, and the period when the rain starts. The farmers would also have a greater control over the quality of seeds they purchase. All participants in focus group discussions concurred that the 'cash for seed' modality is perceived to be the best one. Their choices were open and small local traders also benefited from such a windfall gain.

The interest rate charged by micro-finance institutions is low, however, the opportunities of poorer households to obtain such loans is very low and the only available route seems to be either obtaining loans from informal borrowers or sharecropping out their land

A step-wise approach was pursued in the whole exercise of project planning and implementation. In the first phase a situation analysis and crop assessment was conducted focusing on the needs and priorities of local farmers and the requirements of the poor households to re-embark on production and rehabilitate themselves.

Following this assessment, a proposal was submitted to the potential funding agency, USAID-OFDA. A field visit by representatives from USAID-OFDA showed that the proposal was too modest and more farmers in other Woredas needed the same intervention. It is worth noting at this juncture that the funding agency has responsibly acted to find out the facts on the ground and augmented its support.

The final phase involved community targeting according to the situation analysis conducted in the first phase. CISP and REST share common goals and visions and have already established sound relationship. They independently carried out needs and market assessments. The project was then designed in tandem on the basis of their findings from their independent assessments and reports from the DPPC and Bureau of Agriculture. CISP played the role of coordination and supervision. It also created the forum for assessing the relevance of the project in relation to the facts on the ground. REST enjoys grassroots level presence and is closer to the people. The project not only tapped in existing institutional infrastructure for jointly designing and determining the sort of intervention, but also REST's existing knowledge about the reality on the ground and the needs of the people.

The crisis was pervasive and the project's assistance did not address many who should have been included into the project lists of beneficiaries but were not because of limited resource availability. Consequently, a big proportion of such non-beneficiary households have not yet recovered to their pre-drought levels of economic activity. CISP and the donor agency may not withdraw from this activity soon. There is still a huge army of poor households that desperately needs such assistance.

An aspect of program implementation on which all actors expressed concern is timeliness of fund disbursement. It was a little bit late. The delay was partly explained by the fact that the proposal was submitted a bit late.

Overall such a project is worth replicating whenever such conditions prevail. Without such intervention the number of people requiring food aid would have increase unabated. Households want the intervention in cash because the range of choices is the widest possible. Moreover, the institutional, logistics and information requirements for such a venture would be near prohibitive. The beneficiary is accountable to the members of the community, grassroots' institutions and development agents.

Distributing seed vouchers that could be used by beneficiaries to obtain seed, usually improved seeds, from identified traders, however, the choices of the farmers would be limited by such a venture. In addition, as farmers are risk averse, they tend to prefer indigenous or local seeds. Moreover, farmers have no control over the quality of the seeds. The application of improved seeds requires technical assistance to farmers at village and even household plot levels. The professional capacity of development agents at this point in time and such levels of economic activity leave much to be desired to adopt voucher approach. There is also the economic rationale for injecting money into the local economy in view of market development and its consequent welfare improvement.

The cash, however, arrived late in some localities, and some beneficiaries were not able to plant high-yielding crops like maize and sorghum. CISP employees had to go to different locations and Woredas for observing disbursement, which must have contributed to some delay. Moreover, price of seeds are lower in earlier months compared to the prices in June.

Beneficiaries are accountable to the lowest unit of local administration. CISP and REST deploy people independently on the ground to monitor the implementation of the program. Thus, resources have been productively used by the intended beneficiaries and there was no abuse at all.

All disbursement schedules were supervised by the programme officer and two assistants from CISP. CISP personnel have free access to beneficiaries and gather first-hand information on implementation. REST does the same independently. Results are jointly discussed and discrepancies identified and checked.

All participants of the focus group discussion and interviewees are highly appreciative of the project purpose and its outcome. But they specifically pointed out the following amendments.

- i) Since the lack of seed is a seasonal problem from a regional dimension, this intervention should continue
- ii) A sufficient time should be given to carry out assessment, and identification of target groups.
- iii) Funds should be released at least in April to help beneficiaries effectively and efficiently use such resources

- iv) Earlier release of the funds will also allow rural development offices at the Woreda level to use the money for public work programs prior to the disbursement to beneficiaries.
- v) The CISP's office, which is currently located at Adigrat, may be moved to Mekelle since CISP and REST work together almost on a regular basis and future interventions may include different parts of Tigray.
- vi) With the view to attaining of maximum benefits and bringing beneficiaries back to the development momentum, the assistance may involve a package of similar support services. Though production level has been regained, other assets are depleted and income diversification is desirable.

There was room to augment benefits from the assistance had the money been released earlier and efforts were made to link assistance to rangeland rehabilitation programs and other public works depending on local priorities and development agenda. Moreover, such assistance should not come only at times of crises. There may be a need to provide a broader framework of intervention to maintain the rehabilitation momentum and diversify income, and productivity will have to be enhanced in the future using all available means. Without the seed assistance beneficiaries would have been dependent on assistance for longer periods than is implied by the output they have been able to reap in the last production cycle. Moreover, families would have broken down, forcing at least some family members to move out. Now families are intact and children continue to go to school. For non-beneficiaries repayments of debts entered to obtained seeds have reduced their benefits. Hence, the impact of the project on society at large could have been increased had the assistance come earlier; the number of beneficiaries increased and the project money was paid upon involvement in public works deemed appropriate by the local institutions. This is a short-term intervention project, yet it still has a longer-term impact.

It was noted by some participants that in order for such projects and programs to be sustainable, build in local capacity, and withstand seed shortages immediately after drought shocks, the creation of seed bank within the available service cooperatives is worth considering.

The only institutional capacity gap observed and aired as concern was the lack of sufficient knowledge in targeting beneficiaries by local development agents and grassroots' institutions. Therefore, training in this regard seems warranted. In order to increase benefits from improved varieties of seeds training of development agents in these areas is also vital.

1. Introduction

This study evaluates the project 'Provision of Seeds to Drought Affected People in Eastern and Central Zones of Tigray'. The project was funded by USAID-OFDA and jointly implemented by CISP and Rest. The purpose of the evaluation is to probe into the appropriateness of the project's intervention mechanism of providing cash for the purpose of seed purchase and draw lessons for similar interventions in the future. In the light of this broad context, the evaluation examines the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the project.

The consultants with the support from REST and CISP visited the region between February 29 and March 7, 2004. They discussed with Woreda level officials, grassroots' institutions representatives, beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries and development agents. The resulting output is the outcome of these discussions and deliberations. The consultants would like to acknowledge the contributions of all participants in this exercise. The full list of such participants is given in Annex 1.

The remaining part of this section describes the overall context of the region and the methodology of analysis of this evaluation. Sections 2 deal with the project and its achievements which Section 3 sketches the evaluation paradigm utilized in this work. Section 4 discusses the findings and analyzes them, and finally the section on lessons learned and conclusions is provided.

1.1. The Regional and Project Context

Tigray is one of the nine regional states in Ethiopia. The total land area of the region is 53,386 square kilometers. The cultivable land in the region is estimated at about 10,829.6 square kilometers of which some 93% is currently under cultivation (TRS, 2004). Most of the uncultivated land is located in the western lowlands of the region.

The total population in the region just crossed the 4-million level as of 2002/03. The economic lifeline of more than 83% of the population is subsistence agriculture. Crop production remains the basic economic activity engaging the rural population and is the

main source of its livelihood. On the average, this activity meets only about 40% of the households' needs, thus food production is by far less than sufficient and other sources of income are limited. The rural population is structurally food insecure and a large proportion of the households in the region is food deficit. More than 60% of the total population lives in absolute poverty (MoFED, 2002).

Large parts of the region are recurrently hit by drought. It had suffered from two decades of civil strife and the Ethio-Eritrean war. Most of the topography in the region is rugged and environmental degradation has depleted the productivity of the land. Rainfall is erratic and the rainy season brief, at times it begins early and at other times it starts late. The vast majority of farmers continue to use traditional production technology where oxen are the only source of traction and rain-fed crop production is dominant implying that drought remains to be the most devastating problem in the region. The available physical infrastructure is poor and the role of the market limited. This is in a nutshell the overall picture of rural Tigray.

Concerted efforts are underway to rehabilitate the land and develop social and economic infrastructure. However, the gains from such efforts are easily lost once a drought sets in and poor households are forced to restart their livelihoods from scratch. At times the droughts are so devastating that the economic foundation of the rural population is brought to a halt. The 2002/2003 drought is comparable to the one in 1984, which claimed the lives of many and resulted in mass exodus to neighboring Sudan. This time the problem has been contained without any disastrous effect with the help of external assistance and the institutional infrastructure in place to distribute relief aid. According to official documents the proportion of the population affected and forced to depend on relief aid exceeded 50%.

1.2. Purpose and Scope of Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to probe into the appropriateness of the emergency recovery project by way of cash provision for seed purchase and draw lessons for similar interventions in the future. In the light of this broad context, the evaluation examines the

- relevance of the project according to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, CISP, REST and the local conditions
- efficiency of the project management from the point of view of timeliness of project and resource utilization by beneficiaries for project purpose
- effectiveness of the project in achieving its stated objective
- impact of the project on the welfare of the beneficiaries and the local community, and finally
- sustainability of the project within the framework of local institutional infrastructure.

1.3. Methods and Sources of Information for Evaluation

Primary and secondary sources have been utilized in undertaking this study. The secondary sources consulted are project documents, field reports, and disbursement files to beneficiaries obtained from REST and CISP.

Qualitative data were generated through focus group discussions pertaining to issues of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability of the project. With the view to benefiting from synergy effects in the process of discussion, discussion groups were organized in such a way that perceptions are debated by different parties. Among the total Woredas that benefited from this project three were selected based on accessibility and intensity of the effect of drought. Seven types of focus group discussions were undertaken in the light of their perspectives and roles of their project. These were:

- Joint discussions with representatives from CISP and REST in Mekelle, the regional capital
- Representatives of REST, Rural Development Office, experts from Agricultural Offices and CISP at the Woreda.

- Grassroots' level discussion brought together project beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, peasant association leaders and development agents. Attempts were also made to ensure that both male and female farmers were represented. Three such meetings were organized, one at each Woreda.

The project is concerned with the provision of 'cash for seed' to some 43,693 poor households with primary focus on female-headed families, residing in nine Woredas. It is a tripartite initiative undertaken between CISP, REST and USAID-OFDA with the objective of rehabilitating the most seriously affected households to restart normal production and preventing displacement. Some studies indicated that only 30% of the farmers in the drought affected Woredas could meet their seed requirement.

1.4. Site Selection

The project covers nine Woredas out of which only three were considered in this study. These are Degua Tembien, Adi Ahferom and Ganta Afe Shum. Degua Tembien is rather remote from the central market due to lack of physical infrastructure and the beneficiaries are highlanders. Adi Ahferom is characterized by large population density, and Ganta Afe Shum around Adigrat (a relatively large urban settlement) where land scarcity or decreasing farm size per household is a glaring problem. The Woredas considered in this study were jointly identified by the representatives of CIPS, REST and the consultants. Representativeness, time constraint, road accessibility and the extent to which travel schedules can be synchronized were the main element considered in selecting these Woredas.

1.5. Partnership

The project is a joint venture of CISP, REST and USAID-OFDA. CIPS is an Italian NGO whose mandate is centered around the promotion of food security and rural development. It has already established good relationship with REST in these intervention areas and enjoys good image and reputation from the donor community.

REST had its origins as early as 1978 when there was civil war in Tigray. It was the 1984 drought and the consequent exodus of hundreds of thousands of people that brought the capabilities and potentials of REST to the forefront. The origin of the exodus was not the drought as such. The then incumbent government had plans to resettle the drought victims in other parts of the country. The plan was not positively welcomed and many victims fled to the Sudan. Some 160,000 people obtained relief assistance, and tools and seeds upon their return from the Sudan through REST.

REST's approach to relief assistance is community based. Demands and needs are jointly articulated by the communities, local administration and development agents. There is minimum interference from the center. There is sufficient institutional infrastructure for the farmers to monitor the implementation of projects and programs commensurate with the interests of targeted beneficiaries.

USAID-OFDA is promptly responsive to local needs and its domain of intervention is in the provision of non-food disaster assistance. Its assistance combines both equity and efficiency considerations. But its assistance reaches the beneficiaries through international NGOs in order to ensure that resources are not diverted from their intended use.

This project is therefore exemplary in the sense that objectives and goals of the stakeholders are aligned. The partnership has enabled the efficient exploitation of existing local institutional infrastructure to effectively achieve the project objectives with all the checks and balances from beneficiaries, implementers and the funding body.

2. The Project and Level of Achievement

The overall objective of the 'cash for seed' project is to address the then immediate seed needs of severely drought affected communities in Central and Eastern Zones of the Tigray Regional State. In an earlier agreement CISP secured funds to provide cash for seeds for 10,213 households as part of its larger project called "Supply of Water and Provision of Seeds and Tools in Eastern Tigray Drought Affected Areas" in two Woredas: Gulomekeda and Ganta Afe Shum. However, field visits by officials from the

funding agency, USAID-OFDA, led to an appreciation of the need for a larger intervention than envisaged by the project and advised CISP to enlarge the cash for seed component of the project to encompass additional beneficiaries in the Central and Eastern Zones of the region. Consequently, an agreement was reached between CISP and USAID-OFDA to finance the seed requirements of an additional 33,480 households in seven Woredas, namely, Ahferom, Mereb Leke, Worie Leke, Degua Tembien, Tanqua Abergelle, Kolla Tembien and Wukro.

CISP and REST then entered into a contractual agreement by the 'Letter of Understanding' signed in July 2003. This agreement set out the responsibilities of each institution in a proper manner. In this agreement CISP was responsible of transferring funds, follow the operational plan prepared by the Tigray Relief Committee, evaluating the outcome, and assist REST in the implementation of the project using four of its field personnel. REST's responsibilities regarding the 'cash for seed' component of the project were to timely disburse the funds to beneficiaries, ensure that the most needy households are included in the list of beneficiaries, submit intermediate narrative and financial reports to CISP, and facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Table 1: Number of benefiting households and disbursed funds

No	Woreda	Beneficiary Tabias	No of Beneficiaries	Amount disbursed
1	Gulomekeda	16	5,213	755,885
2	Ganta Afeshum	18	5,000	725,000
	<i>Sub-Total*</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>10,213</i>	<i>1,480,885</i>
1	Ahferom	27	6,472	970,800
2	Wore Leke	22	5,645	846,750
3	Mereb Leke	19	4,368	655,200
4	Degua Temben	18	3,929	589,350
5	Kola Tembien	22	3,729	559,350
6	Tankua Abergele	16	2,125	318,750
7	Wukro	15	7,212	1,081,800
	<i>Sub-Total*</i>	<i>139</i>	<i>33,480</i>	<i>5,022,000</i>
	Total	173	43,693	6,502,885

*Beneficiaries of the initial project signed in February 2003 whereby each beneficiary obtained Birr 145

*Beneficiaries of the second project signed in June 2003 whereby each beneficiary obtained Birr 150

Sources: Project Documents and Reports.

The total amount of resources to be made available to REST was USD 639,761.31. The total fund earmarked to be channeled to the beneficiaries was USD 591,121.31. Thus

around 92% of the funds received by REST was intended to reach the beneficiaries, while the remaining was intended for administrative and operational purposes, including transport and logistics.

As shown in Table 1, a total number of 173 Tabias (local administrative units) were covered by the project in the nine Woredas. The total number of households that obtained the cash for seed was 43,693. Disbursement indicates that the total number of beneficiaries was identical to those planned except for Gulomekeda. Thus, one can safely conclude that the work has been accomplished according to project plan.

3. Evaluation Paradigm

This evaluation utilizes the standard techniques of participatory rural appraisal, which derives views and perceptions from different stakeholders. It critically looks into the issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts and sustainability of the project.

- *Relevance*: Issues of relevance pertain to adequacy and appropriateness of the project in light of the needs and priorities of beneficiaries, institutional objectives and goals of stakeholders, and lost opportunities for non-beneficiaries.
- *Efficiency*: Issues of efficiency focus on whether the resources could have produced even better results under the given local conditions.
- *Effectiveness*: Issues of effectiveness probe into the extent to which project objectives have been achieved and the benefits thereof to beneficiaries have been reaped. These issues largely overlap with the concerns of impact.
- *Impact*: Issues of impact assessment look into the wider effect on target beneficiaries: the household and the community at large. A more global picture is pointed with complementary reading of effectiveness of the project.
- *Sustainability*: Issues of sustainability deal with whether or not there is good grounding for beneficiaries to continue to reap the benefits derived from the assistance over the longer-term perspectives and what might be done to benefit from such interventions on a sustainable basis.

It should be noted, however, that some points appear in different contexts sever times. This is not a matter of neglect. What is important in this kind of study is whether the points raised substantiate the intended purpose.

4. Findings and Analysis

As described earlier, the evaluation focuses on five thematic issues, namely relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability of the project. The findings of the field work and the facts on the ground on each of these thematic issues are presented and discussed below.

4.1. Relevance of the Project

All respondent groups reflected on the pertinent questions relating to the relevance of the project. These questions included reflections on the:

- glaring problems of the local farmers;
- most affected groups of farmers in the localities;
- adequacy of the selection and identification process of beneficiaries for the project;
- consistency with the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, development institutions of local government, grassroots' institutions, REST, and CISP;
- level and extent of participation of different stakeholders in the design and implementation phase of the project;
- strength and limitations of the program;
- coping mechanisms followed by eligible but non-beneficiaries with the seed shortage problem
- worthiness of the project for replication in the future and elsewhere.

Discussions and deliberations on the issues raised above demonstrated that the intervention was highly relevant for the beneficiaries, the community at large and local governments.

4.1.1. Problems of the Local Farmers

Tigray is one of the most drought-prone parts of the country. The land is degraded as a result of centuries of cultivation without adequate attention to environmental degradation.

Moisture shortage for crop production characterizes large parts of the Central and Eastern Zones of Tigray. Moreover, the topography in these localities is rugged and denuded of trees and vegetation. Consequently, the moisture catching capacity of the land is very low. Large parts of these places used to have two rainy seasons: the short rains around February and March, and the main rains between June and October. Locally the short rains are called 'Azmera' rains. These rains were useful to the farming communities in these localities as they allowed them to either plant crops that needed long maturation period with more yield (sorghum, millet, etc.), or enabled them to plant two cycles of production on the same plot per year. However, according to informants in these areas, the short rains have either not materialized at all, or if they do, they do so for a very short period that farmers cannot use them any more for planting purposes. Farmers claim that even the long rains have nowadays become shorter; they either start late or stop early that the total moisture available for crop production is insufficient. Thus, the available moisture is often inadequate for crop production.

Coupled with these, we have the fact that landholding in these localities is very small as a result of high population density, which has resulted in reduced carrying capacity of their arable land. The average landholding ranges between 0.35 hectares (in Ganta Afe Shum) to 0.75 hectares (in Dibdibo). Thus, levels of production are so low that they are insufficient for the sustenance of the households. The farm households, particularly the poor, do not produce for the market but for own consumption. In general, output of poor households can only meet a quarter to three-quarters of the total households' yearly needs. In fact, farmers utilizing the best practices in the area and considered to be relatively rich would only be capable of meeting seven to eight months' needs of the household from crop production. It would therefore not be an exaggeration if we were to say that crop production is not a sufficient means of livelihood, and households are structurally food deficient. To sustain life, farmers must be engaged in other income generating activities, which are literally non-existent. Petty trade and seasonal out-migration of able bodied members of household are the only available and exploited means of augmenting income. As a result, most families depend on food aid, which is mainly distributed in the form of 'food for work', for a good portion of the year for their survival.

Drought exacerbates and erodes the already fragile crop production and food status of rural households. Under such circumstances, food crises set in and asset depletion threatens production possibilities in the following production year. Farmers in these localities hold their assets mainly in the form of domestic animals such as cattle, donkeys, goats and sheep. However, continuous reductions in available moisture for crop production have forced farming households to deplete such assets. There are two basic reasons for this. First, animal feed became scarcer in the face of reduced rainfall. Consequently, the carrying capacity of the land is reduced and less number of animals can survive under such circumstances in a given locality. Second, farmers are forced to sell their animals, often at low prices, in order to meet their basic needs at times of negative shocks in their livelihoods. Drought is the primary cause for such shocks in these localities.

Animal depletion has a dire consequence to livelihoods in general, and farming in particular in these localities. Animal dung is an important source of natural fertilizer and used as an important element of energy source. Moreover, farming activities such as plowing the fields and partly thrashing crops depend heavily on ox-power. Moreover, plowing is an activity performed by adult males, partly because of the archaic technology of farming and partly because the activity is difficult. Thus, though land is more or less evenly distributed, as is the case in the whole country, households lacking in either oxen or adult male labor or both fare badly in these communities. Such a predicament is characteristic of households that are headed by females and the elderly who have no adult labor in the household.

Moreover, drought means that the farmers would not be able to harvest seeds for the next production cycle. This scenario is crucial for the farmers as it means that they lack the means to purchase seeds for ensuring the new cycle of production. Thus, two of the basic inputs in crop production, oxen and seeds, are not readily available in the aftermath of droughts for farming households. This obviously reduces the capacity to recuperate from the drought effects and be engaged in normal production, and attain pre-drought levels of output.

It was under such a background that the 2002 drought struck these areas. As a result of this catastrophe most farmers in the Tigray and almost all farmers in the localities of the project lost the expected output from their farms. In some places the loss was complete and farmers were unable to reap even the crop residue (stems) that could have been used for animal feed and the planted seeds were lost. Actually, people in these localities subsisted on aid for the whole 2002/2003 (1995 EC) year. This implied that there was a large need for seeds when the 2003 rains started. However, the poor farming households had lost all the seeds in the earlier production cycle. Thus, the problem of seeds has categorically been identified as one of the entry points to ensure that farmers engage in the next production cycle and the on-going rehabilitation momentum is not yet completed.

It is this scenario that made the 'cash for seed' project relevant and an appropriate venture in these localities. The farmers identified the project as an instrument that has allowed the beneficiaries to attain their 'normal' or pre-drought levels of production in the 2003 production cycle.

4.1.2. The Most Affected Groups of Farmers in the Localities

The 2002/2003 drought was pervasive, and comparable to the one that occurred in 1984 in this area and led to massive displacement and death tools to both human beings and livestock. Rural poverty is rampant in general, but with an obvious variations and intensity across individual households and areas in the region. A good indicator of wealth in these areas is the ownership of livestock, which in general does not exceed a couple of oxen, a cow, four to five goats and/or sheep. Internally displaced people (IDP) are the bottom least in this respect. The next important contributor to wealth in these localities is the availability of adult male labour in the households. On both counts of wealth indicators, households headed by female and old aged without adult labour are identified as those in the lowest ladder of income source of livelihood.

Labor and ox-deficient households must either hire these factors of production or enter into sharecropping arrangements. However, most poor households do not have the

capacity to hire-in labor and ox-power as this option is an expensive one.¹ Consequently, sharecropping arrangements are the most common practices used as a way out for such households. The forms of such arrangements vary depending on the types of inputs the contracting parties contribute into the venture. Households that contribute only land into the production process; i.e., those without seed, oxen and adult male labor that could be used in plowing, would obviously face the worst scenario of arrangements available in the localities. For instance, if the landholder has no seeds, s/he is forced to forego the crop residue to the person that sharecrops-in the land. Crop residues have market value, and are used as animal feed or for other purposes. Thus, households under such circumstances would lose in the distribution of the final product between the contracting parties.

Apart from the distributional disadvantages explained above, the labor and ox-deficient households reported efficiency (or aggregate output) loss as well. Such losses come up as a result of the timing of planting seeds on the sharecropped-in plots. Since the sharecropping-in persons have their own land, they would cultivate and plant the land they bring in after cultivating their own plots. Given the moisture stress raised earlier, planting seeds the day after the first rains is very important for the germination and yield levels obtainable from farming. Thus, our informants say, there is an output loss due to such arrangements.

4.1.3. Adequacy of the Selection and Identification Process of Beneficiaries for the Project

The project utilized the existing government organizational structures of the rural development bureaus, REST and the available development agents at the various levels of the hierarchy in executing its activities. Moreover, grassroots institutional settings of the communities were exploited properly and resulted in the effective implementation of the project.

¹ The price of hiring a pair of oxen and the required labor varies between Birr 50 and 60 in these localities.

Grassroots' institutions were particularly instrumental in the identification of beneficiaries and were present in person when the money was actually handed to each beneficiary. Information regarding the objectives the project, type of targeted beneficiaries and mechanisms of implementing the project were made public at an early stage of implementation. Given the long tradition of discussing issues has enabled the communities to identify the beneficiaries from their respective villages. Each named beneficiary was raised and discussions held as to whether s/he satisfied the criteria set for being included as such. Noting the fact that the competition was very tight, given the limited amount of available cash and almost unlimited needs for being a beneficiary, the discussions in these forums were very heated and long.

We believe that it was this high level of transparency in project implementation that eliminated any form of complaints from members of the community, particularly the non-beneficiaries. In fact, the non-beneficiaries expressed no complaint in the identification process. They explained that they participated properly in the selection process and expressed their views in the general assemblies. Given that the non-beneficiaries themselves are poor and would have benefited from the project had the available funds been larger, their expression that the beneficiaries were chosen because they satisfied the criteria for selection more than themselves would naturally imply that the selection process was extremely fair.

There were complaints at both the 'meso' (Woreda and Grassroots') level administration and the beneficiaries that the money came in a bit late. The causes of such complaints were different, however. The main reasons for the administrations' complaints were the fact these resources could have been used to finance some public activities. Namely, they expressed the concern of giving out money without any return from the beneficiaries. On the other hand, the beneficiaries indicated that, had they been given the money earlier they could have purchased the seeds earlier, when the prices were lower. Moreover, in some places (Ganta Afe Shum, for instance) the money came so late that beneficiaries could not sow the crops that should have been planted in earlier periods (late May to early June). Thus, the land was prepared for planting but due to delays in disbursement that many beneficiaries were left with the option of planting only pulses.

There was consensus in all deliberations that female headed households are rightly the primary targets of the project, followed by the poor (those without any livestock) and the elderly. This was found consistent with the project's intended beneficiaries. A remark was also expressed that the number of beneficiaries from this project was low compared to the extent of the problem in the localities. Some deserving non-beneficiaries have been left out for the available resources were limited.

4.1.4. Appropriateness of the 'Cash for Seed' Intervention

The lack of seed for the next production cycle erodes the productive capacity of the poor households immediately after drought. Seed is a crucial production input. As a result of drought and crop failure, most farmers had not been able to preserve seeds for the next production season. Noting that the poor households in these localities subsisted on food aid for the whole year implies that they did not have the resources to purchase the required seeds. Thus, making resources available for seed purposes does not seem to be contested at all.

However, the questions could easily arise as to whether providing cash for such purchases was necessary and correct. A number of justifications for such an action were raised by all stakeholders, including the beneficiaries themselves. Some argued that given the emergency nature of the intervention there was no quicker and faster modality of intervention. Moreover, and may be more importantly in terms of efficiency, is the argument that such an opportunity avails farmers to make their own choice of the kind of seed they would like to plant. Given such an opportunity would enable them to purchase exactly what they want and consistent to the local agro-ecology, fertility of the land, and the period when the rain starts. The farmers would also have a greater control over the quality of seeds they purchase. Note that even if the farmers make a mistake, which is less likely than when traders provide them with the seeds, it remains their own and would blame nobody. All participants in focus group discussions concurred with this point. That is, the 'cash for seed' modality is perceived to be the best one. Their choices were open and small local traders also benefited from such a windfall gain.

The better off farmers could easily obtain loans from the micro-finance institution that is operational in the region. The interest rate charged by the institution is relatively low compared to informal lenders. However, the opportunities of poorer households to obtain such loans is very low and the only available route seems to have either obtaining loans from informal borrowers or sharecropping out their land to relatively better off households with the distributional and efficiency consequences raised earlier. Given the limited production capacity of small farmers raised earlier, entering into such forms of contractual agreements would not enable them to reduce the food requirement gap and would increase their food aid dependence and more desperation.

Our deliberations and inquiry to identify the reasons for singling out interventions in seed provision as the main entry point for rehabilitation revealed that it was done on solid grounds. A step-wise approach was pursued. In the first phase a situation analysis and crops assessment was conducted focusing on the needs and priorities of local farmers and the requirements of the poor households to re-embark on production and rehabilitate themselves. The assessment revealed that the lack of seed for the next planting period was an important constraining factor that would disable rehabilitation of the poorest households.

Following this assessment, a proposal was submitted to the potential funding agency, USAID-OFDA. The project was initially designed to provide such services to some 10,213 farmers in two Woredas. A field visit by representatives from USAID-OFDA showed that the proposal was too modest and more farmers in other Woredas needed the same intervention. It is worth noting at this juncture that the funding agency has responsibly acted to find out the facts on the ground and augmented its support.

Having the project proposal approved by the funding agency, i.e., USAID-OFDA, and the federal and regional governments, the final phase involved community targeting according to the situation analysis conducted in the first phase. Accordingly the number of beneficiaries for each Woreda was assigned according to the breadth of the problem and number of affected people. In turn, each Woreda assigned quota for the localities under its jurisdiction.

4.1.5. Level and Extent of Participation of Different Stakeholders in the Design Phase of the Project;

This was also satisfactorily carried out. The most important leverage has been the fact that CISP and REST share common goals and visions and have already established sound relationship. They both focus on rehabilitation and development of adversely affected portions of society. They independently carried out needs and market assessments. The project was then designed in tandem on the basis of their findings from their independent assessments and reports from the DPPC and Bureau of Agriculture. CISP played the role of coordination and supervision. It also created the forum for assessing the relevance of the project in relation to the facts on the ground. REST enjoys grassroots level presence and is closer to the people. The project not only tapped in existing institutional infrastructure for jointly designing and determining the sort of intervention, but also REST's existing knowledge about the reality on the ground and the needs of the people.

4.1.6. Strengths and Limitations of the Project

The project idea was not just an intellectual exercise. It was based on the real needs and priorities of the drought victims. Different institutions had put their heads together in the project design, development and implementation. The project also enjoyed the support of the federal and regional governments and the donor itself. There was strong coordination and partnership. All views and perceptions about the project were favorable. And it had successfully achieved the project purpose.

But since the crisis was pervasive, the assistance did not address many who should have been included into the project lists of beneficiaries but were not because of limited resource availability. Consequently, a big proportion of such non-beneficiary households have not yet recovered to their pre-drought levels of economic activity. CISP and the donor agency may not withdraw from this activity soon. There is still a huge army of poor households that desperately needs such assistance.

An aspect of program implementation on which all actors expressed concern is timeliness of fund disbursement. It was a little bit late. Household decisions on the mix of seeds to

be sowed were not optimal. It is wheat and sorghum that give maximum yield and are valued more by households as the main source of food in these localities. But these take longer to mature. As a result, that opportunity was missed by beneficiaries because the cash arrived to the accounts of REST quite late. The delay was partly explained by the fact that the proposal was submitted a bit late. Selection and identification of beneficiaries took quite some time.

4.1.7. Coping Mechanisms of Non-beneficiaries

The non-beneficiaries coped-up with the problem using different strategies. Some borrowed from micro-finance institutions, others borrowed from informal lenders, yet others gave out their land in sharecropping arrangements. Others were late and were forced to sow cheap crops which resulted in low yield. Some had to sell livestock and were forced to further deplete their asset base. In general, it was not easy for such households. Most are not yet fully rehabilitated to their pre-drought position and the problem persists.

4.1.8. Worthiness of Replicating the Project in the Future and Elsewhere

Overall such a project is worth replicating whenever such conditions prevail. All focus group participants strongly expressed that seed shortage is the most serious problem after drought. Without such an intervention all future prospects of exercising any meaningful economic activity is compromised. The number of people requiring food aid would have increased unabated.

In order to capture the merits of cash for seed intervention deliberations were made on the preferences of households on the forms of such support and discussed experiences from other projects/donors that use different forms of intervention with project personnel. The following are the results of such deliberations.

Household Preferences: Here the responses were almost identical. Households want the intervention in cash because the range of choices is the widest possible. Seed in kind on

the other hand would limit choices. Moreover, the institutional, logistics and information requirements for such a venture would be near prohibitive. It is by far better for the beneficiaries to buy it from the market. In some localities options exist so much so that even agricultural offices buy seeds in local markets. Ensuring that the funds were used for the intended purpose was simple to enforce in these localities. The beneficiary is accountable to the members of the community, grassroots' institutions and development agents. The leaders of grassroots' institutions entered contractual agreements to monitor and ensure that beneficiaries used the cash for the purchase of seeds and nothing else. Beneficiaries were also made aware that in the case of defaulting and misusing the funds, they would return the money to the community.

Experiences from other projects: Project personnel in the area expressed that other organizations have experience in other regions of distributing seed vouchers that could be used by beneficiaries to obtain seed, usually improved seeds, from identified traders. The problem identified here is that the choices of the farmers are being limited by such a venture. In addition, as farmers are risk averse, they tend to prefer indigenous or local seeds. The farmers have no control over the quality of the seeds. Even if sufficient market assessment had been done, there is no guarantee that the seeds available for purchase would be diverse enough to accommodate all possible choices of farmers. Furthermore, choice of seeds is made depending on when the rains start. Once commitment is made on the type and mix of seeds to be availed by traders, there is little room for adjusting to the choices of the farmers. This is a typical problem of centralized planning.

Experience in Tigray has revealed that market information on seed requirements of beneficiaries is difficult to come about. The application of improved seeds requires technical assistance to farmers at village and even household plot levels. The professional capacity of development agents at this point in time and such levels of economic activity leave much to be desired to adopt voucher approach. We are also of the opinion that cash for seed may be replicated elsewhere until such time that the technical capacity of development agents at grassroots' levels is adequately enhanced. At any rate there should be freedom of choice. The beneficiaries are not irrational in making decisions on their

livelihoods. There is also the economic rationale for injecting money into the local economy in view of market development and its consequent welfare improvement.

4.2. Project Management Efficiency

Issues of efficiency in managing the project were assessed against the following issues

- timeliness in the provision of services;
- utilization of resources by the beneficiaries for the intended project purpose;
- monitoring procedures and practices;
- the degree of coordination;
- future mode of intervention.

4.2.1. Timeliness in the Provision of Services

The 2002/2003 drought was one of the most serious in recent history. The drought resulted in not only food shortage but also the lack of seeds for the next season as the seeds used in the previous season were aborted. Beneficiaries have been able to plant their fields, and pre-drought levels of output have been restored for these households. The cash, however, arrived late in some localities. As a result, beneficiaries in such localities were not able to plant high-yielding crops like maize and sorghum. In other words, output for such households could have been higher than what they actually obtained.

Once the commitments were clear the disbursement of cash to beneficiaries was smooth due to the strong institutional framework of REST and grassroots' organisations in the localities. Yet, since the same people from CISP had to go to different locations and Woredas for observing disbursement it must have contributed to some delay. Moreover, price of seeds are lower in earlier months compared to the prices in June. In future therefore, funds should be released two to three months before the planting period.

The levels of coordination of the various organisational structures in the communities seem to be unprecedented in this country. It is REST's capacity and ability to convince as well as coordinate the government's organizational structure that has contributed to the efficiency in the execution of the project. The community and grassroots' institutional set

up and tradition of discussing issues has also contributed tremendously towards such a success.

4.2.2. Utilization of Resources by the Beneficiaries for the Intended Project Purpose;

The management of CISP, REST, local administrations and the beneficiaries themselves is very well structured. Beneficiaries are accountable to the lowest unit of local administration. CISP and REST deploy people independently on the ground to monitor the implementation of the program. The local administration, development agents and leaders of grassroots' organizations gather information and feedback on the same. All members of focus group discussions confirmed that the resources have been productively used by the intended beneficiaries and there was no abuse at all.

REST was responsible for the overall management of the project, its finance department was responsible for the disbursement of funds, and the cashiers from this department handed the cash to each beneficiary of the project. All disbursement schedules were supervised by the programme officer and two assistants from CISP.

4.2.3. Monitoring Procedures and Practices

CISP in Tigray had a 3-man office at the time of implementing this project. The project coordinator and CISP personnel have free access to beneficiaries and gather first-hand information on implementation. REST does the same independently. Results are jointly discussed and discrepancies identified and checked.

Beneficiaries are monitored by the local administration and the community members. The findings of such actions are reported to the Woreda Administration. Reports from different stakeholders are then discussed at the Woreda level. These independent paths of fact finding and joint discussion have put a tight framework for checks and balances on the facts on the ground. Most of all, the fact that all bodies share a common goal and vision about the project must have facilitated the monitoring practices; thus, no conflict of interest could arise.

The high level of transparency in the execution of the project has resulted in reduced costs for monitoring, and actually made the issue of monitoring a trivial issue at least in two levels of project execution. First, the transfer of money from REST to the beneficiaries was smooth. Each grassroots' institution and beneficiary knew the number of people selected and the amount of money that each beneficiary was entitled before cashiers came to disburse the money. Thus, there was no way that resources could be misused or abused at this level. Second, and probably more important in terms of monitoring the use of the disbursed cash for the intended purpose, is the fact that each member of the community knew who the beneficiaries from each community was and the purpose to which the disbursement was intended to be used. This coupled with the fact that there was only a single most important monitoring instrument; the planting of beneficiaries' fields, made it easy to monitor whether the project's intentions were met. Each member of the community could easily observe whether or not beneficiaries planted their fields. Moreover, members of the grassroots' level administration visited the plots of the beneficiaries and ascertained that they were planted. Therefore, the project had set sufficient and inbuilt mechanisms of monitoring and supervision.

4.2.4. The Degree of Coordination;

The institutional framework for intervention in rural Tigray has been there for a long time. REST, Woreda and local administration offices work together. CISP has established good and smooth relationship with all these organs. CISP is the coordinating office for the project. However, since the other bodies are entrusted to discharge a long range of responsibilities, and it was a crisis period, government offices were sometimes overwhelmed by other meetings. Had it not been for the hectic nature of the intervention, however, all offices had all the commitment and competency to cooperate and implement rural intervention programs. Earlier commitment of CISP and the funding agency would have greatly eased their burden.

4.2.5. Future Mode of Intervention

All participants of the focus group discussion and interviewees are highly appreciative of the project purpose and its outcome. But they specifically pointed out the following amendments.

- vii) Since the lack of seed is a seasonal problem from a regional dimension, this intervention should continue
- viii) A sufficient time should be given to carry out assessment, and identification of target groups.
- ix) Funds should be released at least in April to help beneficiaries effectively and efficiently use such resources
- x) Earlier release of the funds will also allow rural development offices at the Woreda level to use the money for public work programs prior to the disbursement to beneficiaries.
- xi) The head office of CISP, which is currently located at Adigrat, may be moved to Mekelle since CISP and REST work together almost on a regular basis and future interventions may include different parts of Tigray.
- xii) With the view of attaining of maximum benefits and bringing beneficiaries back to the development momentum, the assistance may involve a package of similar support services. Though production level has been regained, other assets are depleted and income diversification is desirable.

4.3. Effectiveness

Effectiveness of the project was reviewed against the following pertinent issues:

- Factors affecting achievement of objective
- Management capacity
- Effects of the project

4.3.1. Factors Affecting Achievement of Objective

The project intended to supply cash for the purpose of buying seeds to a total of 43,693 beneficiaries distributed in nine different Woredas of the Central and Eastern Zones. The same number of beneficiaries from these localities was selected properly and the allocated funds have reached them. The beneficiaries used these resources for the intended purpose and have been able to attain the pre-drought levels of production. Thus the project has effectively achieved its objectives and purpose.

This success story is explained by the fact that CISP has effectively based the project purpose and idea on existing knowledge about localities. CISP has also effectively worked in harmony with local institutions, REST in particular. All co-partners enjoyed common purpose and perceptions. The project idea also responded to the most important needs of the beneficiaries. There was no conflict in objectives and purpose.

However, some light shortcomings were mentioned. These included:

- Woreda officials were too busy with other critical assignments. Organising meetings for this project was not easy. It demanded extra-hours work on them.
- The rains came on time. But the cash came a little late in some localities.
- Initially there was some element of fear that sufficient seeds may not be available on the local market. But all went well in the final analysis. Agricultural offices also made seeds available in some localities for beneficiaries who sought to buy improved and adopted seeds. The choice was open to all. Prices did not go beyond the anticipated level and the money was sufficient for the purchase of seeds.
- The most seriously affected people were too many compared to the number of intended beneficiaries. This led to lengthy selection process. The competition was so tight that deliberations for selection of beneficiaries led to serious debates. In the future there is a need for some training to development agents and grassroots' institution leaders on beneficiary targeting.

-The main problems encountered in this process pertained to the unavoidable financial regulations. For instance, bank services are available only in the big towns. Money had to be withdrawn from these banks and transported to the nearest possible destinations where the beneficiaries could be assembled. The working hours of banks are fixed and counting and checking the money took a good part of the mornings. Moreover, cashiers cannot hold money that is not disbursed to beneficiaries at their disposal overnight. Such administrative hurdles made the disbursement of funds a bit difficult and time consuming. At the end of the day, however, with much efforts and dedicated working the REST's personnel were able to disburse the finances in less than a month to the beneficiaries.

4.3.2. Management Capacity

The management capacity of CIPS and REST as well as the grassroots' institutions was favourable. Almost everything went smooth. But it demanded extra-ordinary efforts on the part of Woreda officials, REST, and CISP employees. As pointed out earlier, all targeted beneficiaries were reached and were able to be engaged in production.

The only complaint heard in our deliberations was that the funds were distributed a bit late. This narrowed down the farmers' choices with regards to the crop mix they could be engaged in. Due to the emergency nature of the intervention, the money could not have been used for development works in lieu of free disbursement. In other words, there was room to augment benefits from the assistance had the money been released earlier and efforts were made to link assistance to rangeland rehabilitation programs and other public works depending on local priorities and development agenda.

4.3.3. Effects of the Project

The project has allowed beneficiaries to be as self-reliant as they were before the drought. They are back to the production levels they attained earlier. They have been able to generate seed reserves that can be used in the next production cycle. The assistance has enabled some beneficiaries to produce some high value crops, which they put in the market. The proceeds from sales have allowed them to purchase items they need for

household consumption. But such assistance should not come only at times of crises. There may be a need to provide a broader framework of intervention to maintain the rehabilitation momentum and diversify income.

The project is primarily targeted at female headed households that are highly vulnerable to drought shocks. It has been ascertained by participants in our discussion that it is this focused intervention that produced good results from the point of view of both equity and efficiency. For sure, the beneficiaries will sustain the benefits unless another drought sets in and nothing else is done to avoid its consequences beforehand. Beneficiaries are back on track by way of production. But productivity will have to be enhanced in the future using all available means.

Though beneficiaries have been adequately rehabilitated as a result of this project based on the objectives of the project, the predicament of these households is not yet fully satisfactory. As stated earlier, on the average, crop production in the area is sufficient to feed the households only for about six months. The remaining periods have to be supplemented with other activities. This seems to worry the beneficiaries because it is now widely known that the government intends to stop food aid.

4.4. Project impact

This discussion is very much similar to 4.3 above and issues overlap. The main objective of the project was to enable beneficiaries to attain the pre-drought level of production. In this sense the project has achieved what it set out to do. This has resulted in a sense of self-reliance among beneficiaries, though their produce carries them only from four to nine months. Without the seed assistance beneficiaries would have been dependent on assistance for longer periods than is implied by the output they have been able to reap in the last production cycle. Moreover, families would have broken down, forcing at least some family members to move out. Now families are intact and children continue to go to school

However, the number of beneficiaries relative to those who were in need is far below what one would have liked to see. The non-beneficiaries in the last cycle have not been

able to attain the levels attained by the beneficiaries. They were rather left to the vagaries of the market and money as well as seed lenders. Repayments of such debt have reduced their benefits. Moreover, as explained earlier, those that sharecropped out their land were exposed to the disadvantages faced in such arrangements when they do not have seeds. Whereas the objective of the project has been largely satisfied for the beneficiaries of the cash for seed, its impact in relation to the problem observed is very limited. There still remain a large number of non-beneficiaries that are not rehabilitated sufficiently in the project areas. Hence, the impact of the project on society at large could have been increased had the assistance come earlier, the number of beneficiaries increased and the project money was paid upon involvement in public works deemed appropriate by the local institutions.

4.5. Sustainability of Project

This is a short-term intervention project, yet it still has a longer-term impact. Continued similar intervention is pertinent for similar beneficiaries from the regional context. Though the last drought was pervasive and affected large part of the region there are always pockets of drought in Tigray. This is a sound way to get drought-victims back in the course of production. Each drought diminishes its victims to permanent relief recipient unless such projects are conceptualized and implemented within the broader rural development framework.

This project is one in which development partnership is amply demonstrated. All stakeholders, namely REST, CISP and local communities were involved at each stage from the point of project definition and design to its completion. They all strongly believe in the project purpose. The project tapped in existing institutional infrastructure. The only constraint aired in the discussions and interviews is that there were too many deserving households in relation to the number of allocated funds.

The cash for seed assistance is consistent with the local needs. Beneficiaries and stakeholders expressed that local farmers prefer to use indigenous seeds and not leave outcomes to chance. Others have the option to buy improved and adopted seeds from the agricultural offices located in the Woreds. The best scenario for assistance provision is

therefore that of providing cash to allow beneficiaries make their own choice. The paternalistic view that experts have the solution and farmers have to follow their advice should not be taken seriously. Farmers make the best choices given the circumstances prevailing on the ground and institutional set ups observed in Tigray have strong inbuilt monitoring capacity that provide sufficient enforcement mechanisms.

It was noted by some participants that in order for such projects and programs to be sustainable, build in local capacity, and withstand seed shortages immediately after drought shocks, the creation of seed bank within the available service cooperatives is worth considering. The nitty-gritty may not be simple as there are issues of preservation and appropriate small-scale technologies may be desirable. The modality however should be such that needy families get access to seeds but they pay it back either in the form of cash or in kind. This should be instituted within the medium term in view of promoting self-reliance and breaking dependency.

The only institutional capacity gap observed and aired as concern was the lack of sufficient knowledge in targeting beneficiaries, when there are too many victims, by local development agents and grassroots' institutions. Therefore, training in this regard seems warranted. In order to increase benefits from improved varieties of seeds training of development agents in these areas is also vital. Farmers are largely reluctant to use improved seeds because of lack of awareness. As some evidence has shown these improved seeds are not local conditions specific and may be carrying too much risk for these poor farmers. Thus, farmers would need to observe these demonstrated on a small-scale level to change their perceptions and win their confidence.

5. Lessons Learned and Conclusion

The purpose of this evaluation is to probe into the appropriateness of the emergency recovery project by way of cash provision for seed purchase and draw lessons for similar interventions in the future. The evaluation utilizes the standard techniques of participatory rural appraisal, which derives views and perceptions from different stakeholders. It critically looks into the issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts and sustainability of the project.

The project is a joint venture of CISP, REST and USAID-OFDA with the objective of rehabilitating the most seriously affected households to restart normal production and preventing displacement. Specifically, it is concerned with the provision of 'cash for seed' to some 43,693 poor households with primary focus on female-headed families, residing in nine Woredas of the Central and Eastern Zones of the Tigray Regional State.

CIPS is an Italian NGO whose mandate is centered around the promotion of food security and rural development. REST's approach to relief assistance is community based. Demands and needs are jointly articulated by the communities, local administration and development agents. There is minimum interference from the center. There is sufficient institutional infrastructure for the farmers to monitor the implementation of projects and programs commensurate with the interests of targeted beneficiaries. USAID-OFDA is promptly responsive to local needs and its domain of intervention is in the provision of non-food disaster assistance. Its assistance combines both equity and efficiency considerations. But its assistance reaches the beneficiaries through international NGOs in order to ensure that resources are not diverted from their intended use. This project is therefore exemplary in the sense that objectives and goals of the stakeholders are aligned. The partnership has enabled the efficient exploitation of existing local institutional infrastructure to effectively achieve the project objectives with all the checks and balances from beneficiaries, implementers and the funding body.

Tigray is one of the most drought-prone parts of the country. The land is degraded as a result of centuries of cultivation without adequate attention to environmental degradation. Moisture shortage for crop production characterizes large parts of the Central and Eastern Zones of Tigray. The short rains have either not materialized at all, or they do so for a very short period that farmers cannot use them any more. Even the long rains have nowadays become shorter; they either start late or stop early that the total moisture available for crop production is insufficient. Moreover, the topography in these localities is rugged and denuded of trees and vegetation. Consequently, the moisture catching capacity of the land is very low.

Landholding in these localities is very small as a result of high population density, which has resulted in reduced carrying capacity of the arable land in these localities. The average landholding ranges between 0.35 hectares to 0.75 hectares. Output of poor households can only meet a quarter to three-quarters of the total household needs. To sustain life, farmers must be engaged in other income generating activities, which are literally non-existent. As a result, most families depend on food aid, which is mainly distributed in the form of 'food for work', for a good portion of the year for their survival.

Drought exacerbates and erodes the already fragile crop production and food status of rural households. Under such circumstances, food crises set in and asset depletion threatens production possibilities in the following production year. Animal depletion has a dire consequence to livelihoods in general, and farming in particular in these localities. Thus, though land is more or less evenly distributed, as is the case in the whole country, households lacking in either oxen or adult male labor or both fare badly in these communities. Such a predicament is characteristic of households that are headed by females and the elderly who have no adult labor in the household. Thus, two of the basic inputs in crop production, oxen and seeds, are not readily available in the aftermath of droughts for farming households.

It was under such a background that the 2002 drought struck these areas. As a result of this catastrophe most farmers in the Tigray and almost all farmers in the localities of the

project lost the expected output from their farms. It is this scenario that made the 'cash for seed' project relevant and an appropriate venture. The farmers identified the project as an instrument that has allowed the beneficiaries to attain their 'normal' or pre-drought levels of production in the 2003 production cycle.

The 2002/2003 drought was pervasive. Rural poverty is rampant in general, but with an obvious variations and intensity across individual households and areas in the region. A good indicator of wealth in these areas is the ownership of livestock. The next important contributor to wealth in these localities is the availability of adult male labour in the households. On both counts of wealth indicators, households headed by female and old aged without adult labour are identified as those in the lowest ladder of income source of livelihood.

The project utilized the existing government organizational structures of the rural development bureaus, REST, and the available development agents at the various levels of the hierarchy in executing its activities. Moreover, grassroots institutional settings of the communities were exploited properly and resulted in the effective implementation of the project.

Information regarding the objectives the project, type of targeted beneficiaries and mechanisms of implementing the project were made public at an early stage of implementation. Given the long tradition of discussing issues has enabled the communities to identify the beneficiaries from their respective villages. Noting the fact that the competition was very tight given the limited amount of available cash and almost unlimited needs for being a beneficiary, the discussions in these forums were very heated and long. In fact, the non-beneficiaries expressed no complaint in the identification process.

There were complaints at both the 'meso' (Woreda and Grassroots') level administration and the beneficiaries that the money came in a bit late. The causes of such complaints were different, however. Form the administrative units' point of view these resources could have been used to finance some public activities. On the other hand, the beneficiaries in some localities indicated that they could not sow the crops that should

have been planted in earlier periods (late May to early June) such as maize and sorghum. Had they been given the money earlier they could have purchased the seeds earlier, when the prices were lower. CISP representatives had to go to different locations and Woredas for observing disbursement which must have contributed to some delay. Moreover, price of seeds are lower in earlier months compared to the prices in June. Thus, earlier disbursement of cash, which was hampered by administrative and financial reasons as well as the need to identify the most needy beneficiaries would have ensured a greater impact at the grassroots level.

There was consensus in all deliberations that female headed households are rightly the primary targets of the project, followed by the poor (those without any livestock) and the elderly. Some deserving non-beneficiaries have been left out for the available resources were limited.

The lack of seed for the next production cycle erodes the productive capacity of the poor households immediately after drought. Seed is a crucial production input. As a result of drought and crop failure, most farmers had not been able to preserve seeds for the next production season.

Some argued that given the emergency nature of the intervention there was no quicker and faster modality of intervention than 'cash for seed'. Moreover, the model avails an opportunity to the farmers in making their own choice of the kind of seed they would like to plant, which is consistent to the local agro-ecology, fertility of the land, and the period when the rain starts. The farmers would also have a greater control over the quality of seeds they purchase. All participants in focus group discussions concurred the 'cash for seed' modality is perceived to be the best one. Their choices were open and small local traders also benefited from such a windfall gain.

The interest rate charged by micro-finance institutions is low, however, the opportunities of poorer households to obtain such loans is very low and the only available route seems to have either obtaining loans from informal borrowers or sharecropping out their land.

In the whole process of project identification a step-wise approach was pursued. In the first phase a situation analysis and crop assessment was conducted focusing on the needs and priorities of local farmers and the requirements of the poor households to re-embark on production and rehabilitate themselves. Following this assessment, a proposal was submitted to the potential funding agency, USAID-OFDA. A field visit by representatives from USAID-OFDA showed that the proposal was too modest and more farmers in other Woredas needed the same intervention. It is worth noting at this juncture that the funding agency has responsibly acted to find out the facts on the ground and augmented its support. The final phase involved community targeting according to the situation analysis conducted in the first phase.

CISP and REST share common goals and visions and have already established sound relationship. They independently carried out needs and market assessments. The project was then designed in tandem on the basis of their findings from their independent assessments and reports from the DPPC and Bureau of Agriculture. CISP played the role of coordination and supervision. It also created the forum for assessing the relevance of the project in relation to the facts on the ground. REST enjoys grassroots level presence and is closer to the people. The project not only tapped in existing institutional infrastructure for jointly designing and determining the sort of intervention, but also REST's existing knowledge about the reality on the ground and the needs of the people.

The crisis was so pervasive that the assistance did not address many who should have been included into the project lists of beneficiaries but were not because of limited resource availability. Consequently, a big proportion of such non-beneficiary households have not yet recovered to their pre-drought levels of economic activity. CISP and the donor agency may not withdraw from this activity soon. There is still a huge army of poor households that desperately needs such assistance.

An aspect of program implementation on which all actors expressed concern is timeliness of fund disbursement. It was a little bit late. The delay was partly explained by the fact that the proposal was submitted a bit late. However, such a project is worth replicating

whenever such conditions prevail. The number of people requiring food aid would have increase unabated.

Households want the intervention in cash because the range of choices is the widest possible. Moreover, the institutional, logistics and information requirements for such a venture would be near prohibitive. The beneficiary is accountable to the members of the community, grassroots' institutions and development agents.

An alternative identified in the literature and applied elsewhere is distributing 'seed vouchers' that could be used by beneficiaries to obtain improved seeds from predetermined traders. However, the choices of the farmers are being limited under such arrangements. In addition, as farmers are risk averse, they tend to prefer indigenous or local seeds. The farmers have no control over the quality of the seeds.

The application of improved seeds requires technical assistance to farmers at village and even household plot levels. The professional capacity of development agents at this point in time and such levels of economic activity leave much to be desired to adopt voucher approach. There is also the economic rationale for injecting money into the local economy in view of market development and its consequent welfare improvement.

Beneficiaries are accountable to the lowest unit of local administration. CISP and REST deploy people independently on the ground to monitor the implementation of the program. All disbursement schedules were supervised by the programme officer and two assistants from CISP. As a result, the resources have been productively used by the intended beneficiaries and there was no abuse at all.

CISP personnel have free access to beneficiaries and gather first-hand information on implementation. REST does the same independently. Results are jointly discussed and discrepancies identified and checked.

All participants of the focus group discussion and interviewees are highly appreciative of the project purpose and its outcome. But they specifically pointed out the following amendments.

- Since the lack of seed is a seasonal problem from a regional dimension, this intervention should continue
- A sufficient time should be given to carry out assessment, and identification of target groups.
- Funds should be released at least in April to help beneficiaries effectively and efficiently use such resources
- Earlier release of the funds will also allow rural development offices at the Woreda level to use the money for public work programs prior to the disbursement to beneficiaries.
- The head office of CISP, which is currently located at Adigrat, may be moved to Mekelle since CISP and REST work together almost on a regular basis and future interventions may include different parts of Tigray.
- With the view to attaining of maximum benefits and bringing beneficiaries back to the development momentum, the assistance may involve a package of similar support services. Though production level has been regained, other assets are depleted and income diversification is desirable.

There was room to augment benefits from the assistance had the money been released earlier and efforts were made to link assistance to rangeland rehabilitation programs and other public works depending on local priorities and development agenda. But such assistance should not come only at times of crises. There may be a need to provide a broader framework of intervention to maintain the rehabilitation momentum and diversify income, and productivity will have to be enhanced in the future using all available means.

Without the seed assistance beneficiaries would have been dependent on assistance for longer periods than is implied by the output they have been able to reap in the last production cycle. Moreover, families would have broken down, forcing at least some family members to move out. Now families are intact and children continue to go to school.

For non-beneficiaries repayments of debts entered to obtained seeds have reduced their benefits. Hence, the impact of the project on society at large could have been increased

had the assistance come earlier, the number of beneficiaries increased, and the project money was paid upon involvement in public works deemed appropriate by the local institutions.

Obviously this is a short-term intervention project, yet it still has a longer-term impact. There are always pockets of drought in Tigray and unless such projects are conceptualized and implemented within the broader rural development framework, the prospects for the development of these localities cannot be realised. It was noted by some participants that in order for such projects and programs to be sustainable, build in local capacity, and withstand seed shortages immediately after drought shocks, the creation of seed bank within the available service cooperatives is worth considering.

The only institutional capacity gap observed and aired as concern was the lack of sufficient knowledge in targeting beneficiaries by local development agents and grassroots' institutions. Therefore, training in this regard seems warranted. In order to increase benefits from improved varieties of seeds training of development agents in these areas is also vital.

Annex 1: List of Participants

a) Regional Level

1. Ato Yemane Solomon, Planning and Coordination Head, REST, Mekelle
2. Ato Tsegay Assefa, Relief and Rehabilitation Head, REST, Mekelle
3. Ato Muuz Fitsum: Relief and Rehabilitation Coordinator, REST, Mekelle
4. Mr. Paolo Dieci: Country Representative, CISP, Addis Ababa
5. Ato Tesfaye Beyene: Country Programmes Officer, CISP, Addis Ababa
4. Ato Woldeab Basaznew: Field Coordinator, CISP, Adigrat

B) Woreda level

1. Ato Gizachew Gebru: Rural Development Head, Dogua Tembien Woreda, Agere Selam
2. Ato Theodros Girma: Woreda Representative, REST, Dogua Tembien, Agere Selam
3. Ato Desta Teferi: Rural Development Head, Aferom Woreda, Enticho
4. Ato Tesfaye G/Kidan: Team Leader, Crop Production and Protection, Aferom Woreda, Enticho
5. Ato Kahsay G/Michael: Rural Development Head, Ganta Afeshum Woreda, Adigrat
6. Ato Tadesse Birhane: Woreda Agriculture Office Head, Ganta Afeshum Woreda, Adigrat

a) Grassroots' level

No	Name	Type	Woreda	P. A.
1	Haleka Kaleayu Tewoldemedhin	Beneficiary	Degua Tembien	Aymbirkekin
2	Ato Gebrekios Gebrekidan	Beneficiary	Degua Tembien	Aymbirkekin
3	W/ro Kiros Hailu	non-beneficiary	Degua Tembien	Aymbirkekin
4	W/ro Silas Mezgebe	Beneficiary	Degua Tembien	Aymbirkekin
5	Ato Hailu Gerezgiher	Grassroots official	Degua Tembien	Aymbirkekin
6	Ato Mulu Haileselassie	Non-beneficiary	Degua Tembien	Aymbirkekin
7	Ato Meresa Gidey	Development Agent	Degua Tembien	Aymbirkekin
8	Ato Desta Gebremikael	Development Agent	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
9	Ato Teklay Hadgu	Non-beneficiary	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
10	Ato Halefom Hadush	Development Agent	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
11	W/ro Silas Gebremikael	Non-beneficiary	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
12	W/ro Kaleeti Gebremedhin	Beneficiary	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
13	W/ro Alganesh Kassa	Development Agent	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
14	W/ro Yemaynesh Abraha	Non-beneficiary	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
15	Ato Abadi Tafere	Non-beneficiary	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
16	Ato Hailay Nrea	Grassroots official	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
17	Ato Tesfamichael Beyene	Bureau of Agriculture	Ganta Afeshum	Buket
18	Ato Hagos Tele	Grassroots official	Ahferom	Dibdibo
19	W/ro Mitslal Kidane	Beneficiary	Ahferom	Dibdibo
20	Ato Gebrekidan Arefaine	Non-beneficiary	Ahferom	Dibdibo
21	Ato Fisha Gebremedhin	Beneficiary	Ahferom	Dibdibo
22	W/ro Atsede Mesfin	Beneficiary	Ahferom	Dibdibo
23	Ato Mehamed Raja	Non-beneficiary	Ahferom	Dibdibo
24	Ato Gebremariam Woldeselassie	Development Agent	Ahferom	Dibdibo

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Annex 3: Terms of Reference for Evaluating Seed Supply Program

1. *Introduction*

The severe drought of FY 2003 was followed by immediate food crises and asset depletion. The food gap was addressed through external food aid, while depletion of farm assets needed to be contained through emergency recovery programs, one of the key programs being seeds supply. CISP and REST disbursed cash for the purchase of seeds, to poor household farmers in Gulomekada, Wukro, and Ganta Afeshum Woredas of Eastern Zone and Ahferom, Mereb-Leke, Worie-Leke, Kolla Tembien, Tanqua Abergelle, Dogua Tembien, Woredas of Central Zone of Tigray. The experience of cash for seeds provision is to be evaluated by a consultant on its approach and appropriateness in relation to emergency interventions.

The purpose of the evaluation of the cash for seed is to:-

- ❖ Gather significant information and guidelines from the project's achievements in order to replicate and possibly improve in other areas the methodology followed by the project itself. This will also lead to formulate other proposals for funding in order to strengthen a strategy aimed at linking relief to rehabilitation;
- ❖ Provide local institutional and community stakeholders with quantitative and qualitative information on the impact of the project;
- ❖ Provide the funding donor of this project (USAID OFDA) and, more generally speaking, the donors community in Ethiopia, with accountable information on the results achieved by the project.

2. *Objectives of the Evaluation*

The evaluation will focus on five issues that can measure results, impacts and linkages of relief to development in the project areas. The five issues to be applied in the evaluation are:

- 2.1 To assess the relevance of the project in relation to addressing identified problems of beneficiaries, reflects to development priorities and policies of CISP, REST and local partners.
- 2.2 To assess the efficiency of services provided and resources and time managed appropriately to a great extent.
- 2.3 To evaluate the effectiveness of the project in terms of achievement of expected results that leads to the project purpose.
- 2.4 To measure the impacts of the project on targeted beneficiaries as well as to its wider effect on larger community members in a geographic area in terms of technical, economic, socio-cultural and institutional factors to the relationship of the project purpose and overall objectives.
- 2.5 To assess the sustainability of the project with special regard to its incorporation within the institutional framework.

3. *Major Activities to be Accomplished in the Evaluation*

In order to undertake the evaluation, the following points have to be analyzed.

3.1. The consistency of the design with the local situation and coherence with other interventions:

- Identification and selection of target groups/beneficiaries.
- ❖ Identification of target groups/beneficiaries needs and priorities.
- ❖ Participation of local stakeholders in the design phase.
- ❖ Assessment of local absorption and local implementation capacities.
- ❖ Coherence with other development initiative in the region and/or sector.

The overall logic of the project design will be assessed according with the following parameters:-

- ❖ Quality of the project design, including the assumptions and risks identified
- ❖ Realism in the selection of objectives and services to be provided

3.2 The analysis of efficiency focuses on:

- The quality of the project management
- ❖ Management of the financial resources
- ❖ Timely provision of services.
- ❖ Relationship with stakeholders, beneficiaries and other local institutions/ authorities
- ❖ Quality of monitoring procedures and practices, including the use of indicators of efficiency.

3.2 The effectiveness measures whether the planned purposed/outcomes have been achieved and whether the planned benefits have been reaped by the intended beneficiaries. In particular, it focuses on:

- ❖ The factors influencing the achievement of the purpose, including unforeseen external factors.
- ❖ The management capacity to ensure that the results achieved allow to reach the purpose.
- ❖ The reaction of beneficiaries and the use of project results and benefits.
- ❖ The unplanned results that are likely to affect benefits.
- ❖ The potential effects of results obtained on crosscutting issues such as gender, environment and poverty reduction.

3.3 The focus of impact is normally on:

- ❖ The extent to which the overall objectives were achieved and the contribution of the project to their achievement.
- ❖ The external factors that influenced the overall impact and the capacity of the project to respond to these factors.
- ❖ The possible unplanned impacts of the project and their effects on the overall impact.
- ❖ The possible longer-term effects of the project.
- ❖ The impacts of the project on gender-related, environment and poverty issues.

3.4 The issue of sustainability is very large and the relative importance of the different issues will depend on the nature of the project and its relation with the local context. Analysis of sustainability can focus on:

- ❖ Stakeholders' ownership of objectives (participation in their definition during the design phase) and achievements (participation throughout the

- ❖ duration of the project).
- ❖ Institutional sustainability: the extent to which the project is embedded in and respects the local organizations/institutional structures, the capacity of these structures to take over after the project end and the adequacy of the project's budget for this purpose.
- ❖ Financial sustainability: whether the services provided to the beneficiaries are likely to continue after the funding ends; whether enough funds were available to cover all costs and whether the costs are likely to continue after the funding ends.
- ❖ Socio-cultural sustainability: whether the project takes into account the local perception of needs and respects the local status systems and beliefs; whether the changes produced by the project have been accepted by the beneficiaries and other stakeholders and how.
- ❖ Technical sustainability: whether the technology and knowledge provided fit in with existing traditions, skills and knowledge; whether the beneficiaries are likely to be able to maintain the technology acquired without further assistance.
- ❖ Possibility of replicating successful impacts for a possible extension of the project or of other similar interventions.

4. *Approach to the Evaluation*

To get appropriate information on the above mentioned pointed, the consultant has to interview key informants at different level.

- Cash for seeds beneficiaries.
- Tabia (P A) extension agents.
- Woreda administration council members and Woreda agriculture offices.
- REST and CISP staff members at head quarter and field level.
- Agriculture Bureau.

5. *Methodology and Reporting*

- The consultant has to identify and list evaluation techniques.
- Has to collect data.
- Conduct interview, visits to project areas.
- Deskwork, analysis of information collected.
- Reporting

Annex 4. Evaluation Team

1. Tekie Alemu is an economist working at the Department of Economics. He is an Assistant Professor holding a Ph.D. His academic interest ranges from environmental issues to poverty alleviation mechanisms. He has been actively participating in rural development issues.
2. Getachew Yoseph is an economist who attained the rank of Associate Professor in his long experience in teaching at the Department of Economics. He is currently a freelancer and works on development issues.